

# ***International Talks on Architecture***

## ***First edition***

### ***„Housing. Problems. Houses. Beauty!“***

**05-12-2024**

**2 - 8 pm Audimax**

**with the participation of**

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**Tim Panzer, DEMO Working Group Cologne**

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**chaired by Hannah Knoop, KIT Karlsruhe**

**and initiated by Franziska Kramer, HBC Biberach**

**‘To every generation its house!’<sup>1</sup>**

Siegfried Giedion wrote these words in 1914, and they encompass two ideas: that housing is in a constant state of change and that living space is constructed according to the ideas of each generation.

We think back to the year 1900, when land prices continued to rise. The sociologist and philosopher Maurice Halbwachs published his dissertation *‘Les Expropriations et le prix des terrains à Paris 1860–1900’* in 1909. Arrondissement by arrondissement, he analysed the development of land prices and documented their rise over decades. Simultaneously, in Berlin, the technician and carpenter Gustav Müller published maps documenting the land value of individual plots. These exemplary observations on the rapid rise and valuation of land prices, which seem rational to us, resulted in a profound discourse on housing at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, one that demonstrated different facets of the housing crisis of the time, such as spatial issues, political influences, economic conditions, and social visions. Thinking about housing and those who live in it also leads around 1900 to the often described fear that the individual no longer seems to be sufficiently represented in the city. This idea eventually found its way into parallel thinking about the city and architecture based on disciplines such as sociology and philosophy.

Today, just over 100 years later, we once again confront—or continue to confront—the so-called housing question, which makes us, practising and researching architects, realise that housing is still under-examined and sometimes under-debated in light of the above-mentioned influences. Thus, in 2024, we must ask again how we can live now and in the future. To follow Giedion, we assume, in his words, that there are no longer isolated issues. Things interpenetrate.

Architectures explain themselves in light of changes. Problems provide an opportunity to think about architecture fundamentally. Housing has become a political issue, and various mechanisms, such as land speculation or over-tourism, have recently increasingly led to housing—already a rare commodity—that remains affordable for only a few. As a result, we see demonstrations against rising rents in Barcelona, Lisbon, and Naples.

The first international ‘Talks on Research in Architecture’, which will take place at the HBC in Biberach in December 2024, will therefore be dedicated to the topic of housing and include the participation of various researchers. Assuming that thinking about housing in architecture is characterised by and through society, historians, theorists, art historians, and practising architects are invited to present their research on housing. We will trace the history of housing construction, examining moments when demands for more social housing and when state or cooperative housing programmes were launched. We will discuss the connection between project and politics, aesthetic issues, and standards in housing construction.